



E1-429

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

December 4, 2003

Mr. James R. Paschall
Norfolk Southern Corporation
Law Department
Three Commercial Place
Norfolk, Virginia, 23510-9241

LYNDO TIPPETT
SECRETARY



Re: STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 240X), Norfolk Southern Railway
Company - Abandonment Exemption - In Gaston County, NC

Dear Mr. Paschall:

This letter responds to your November 12, 2003 correspondence to the Surface Transportation Board in which you declined to negotiate with the City of Gastonia, and the Town of Dallas, North Carolina under the National Trails System Act. The reason cited was potential interest of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and the North Carolina Railroad in acquiring the subject rail line. Please note for the record NCDOT has no interest in acquiring the subject line and we strongly support the efforts of the City of Gastonia and the Town of Dallas to preserve the railroad for a local rail-trail. The proposed rail-trail concept is consistent with the Gaston County comprehensive plan and would help to strengthen pedestrian access between Dallas and the City of Gastonia. It would also provide improved pedestrian access to Rankin Lake Park and Gaston College. Please call me at 919-733-7245 Ext. 273 if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

Shirley Williams
Assistant Director

cc:

Ms. Sarah B. Covey, Norfolk Southern Corporation
Vernon Williams, Surface Transportation Board
Jack Kiser, City of Gastonia
Scott Saylor, North Carolina Railroad Company

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TRANSPORTATION BUILDING
1 SOUTH WILMINGTON STREET
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